

Disaster Behavioral Health Response Teams: A valuable resource in RI emergency response

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On February 24th there was a significant, early morning fire at an apartment complex on the Warwick/East Greenwich line. The fire destroyed one of the buildings, leaving 40 or more people homeless and without possessions or needed medication. RI Red Cross Emergency Services Director, Nick Logothets, was on-scene and quickly recognized the need for behavioral health supports. He called The Kent Center's (TKC) answering service.

TKC responded and immediately provided a situational assessment which included information that nearby Christ Church had opened a reception area for people evacuated from their homes.

Later that day, Norm Menard, Red Cross Deputy Emergency Services Director commented that a number of Red Cross volunteers and first-responders had remarked to him that they appreciated the skilled response provided by staff from TKC.

Several days later, Nick Logothets commented that the quick and professional behavioral health response provided by TKC was critical to the overall successful response to the fire. He added that these teams are held in especially high regard by our State's Red Cross chapter and, as he also acknowledged hearing anecdotally, by first responders in Rhode Island.